

# JSC Clinic rolls out new Case Management Program

To ensure appropriate medical attention, proper follow-up and successful return to work for any injured or ill JSC employee, the center's Occupational Health and Test Support Office has established a Case Management Program. The program has been in effect for approximately six months, although the official rollout began with the June presentation of the program to the JSC Executive Safety Committee.

As part of the new program, a nurse case manager has been added to augment the JSC workers compensation claim officer. The nurse tracks each case from the time the injury or illness is initially reported, until the employee successfully returns to work.

According to JSC Nurse Case Manager Connie Hesselgesser, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA, reports that the average lost time injury case costs an employer about \$40,000. "At JSC we have done an excellent job of abating and controlling workplace hazards, but found we needed to improve upon our process to meet the needs of the employee in the event an injury or illness," said Hesselgesser. "Proper management, clinically and administratively, can restore the productivity of the injured worker and possibly prevent the mishap from becoming a lost time incident."

A key element of this program is the Clinic First policy. To ensure early medical treatment and proper incident investigation, employees must report all injuries and illnesses as soon as possible to the JSC Clinic.

"We found that if the employee reported to the JSC Clinic immediately after the mishap and was logged into the



NASA JSC Photo 2000E22982 by James Blair

## Clinic First

**Nurse Case Manager Connie Hesselgesser, left, and Workers' Compensation Specialist Pam Daley play key roles in implementing the Johnson Space Center Case Management Program designed to ensure proper medical care and successful return to work for any injured or ill JSC employee.**

system, we were less likely to have complications later that could lead to further aggravation of the injury or result in unnecessary lost time," said Hesselgesser. "Through additional education and promotion, we want every JSC team member to know that in the event of an injury or illness, they should report to the Clinic First. In an emergency situation, call the five threes for JSC and SCTF or the five fours for Ellington Field. This will summon medical and emergency responders to the scene of the mishap."

Active management involvement in the case management process from beginning to end is also critical. The manager of the employee should report to the JSC Clinic or the hospital with the ill or

injured employee to provide support and compassionate care. Once the proper diagnosis and treatment is provided, management can work with the medical team to determine the employee's work status (return to work, return to work with restricted duty, or referral out for additional diagnosis and treatment). Management is also responsible for overseeing the mishap investigation and filing the necessary paperwork (Mishap Form 1627) to record the mishap.

Returning employees to work as soon as they are medically able will pay benefits in the long term, even if the employee returns to work under restricted duty. "Although this process benefits our mishap rates, the real gain is in the assurance our employees

will gain knowing that management is genuinely concerned about their well-being," said Hesselgesser.

For NASA employees, the JSC workers compensation claim officer, Pam Daley, works with the employee to file claims and receive any necessary outside medical treatment. For contractor team members, Hesselgesser contacts appropriate officials and assists with additional care through the employee's designated claims officer. It is a team effort involving medical, management, human resources and other safety and health professionals.

Response to this program has been overwhelmingly positive. Employees, managers and contractor representatives have expressed gratitude for prompt attention, notification and follow-through of cases presented by employees at JSC.

"Several employees we contacted after being seen in our clinic were very surprised, but pleased, to have someone call them for a follow-up," says Daley. "Most of the time the purpose of the call is just to ask how the patient is doing and to ask if we can do anything else to help, but people really appreciate the personal touch."

JSC's Occupational Health and Test Support Office will soon provide additional information and details on the case management process on the Total Health portion of the S&TH homepage on the JSC internal Web site. In addition, an educational presentation about the process is available to be given at safety meetings, all hands and other functions by request. ■

*For more information contact the JSC Clinic at x34111 or the nurse case manager at x31132.*

## Aviation, a gift to the community for JSC volunteer



**More than 400 volunteers, including JSC's Everett Gibson, bring aviation history to the community through the Wings Over Houston Airshow.**

NASA aircraft, such as the Super Guppy transport aircraft, the WB-57 high-altitude weather aircraft, the Shuttle

Training Aircraft and astronaut T-38 trainers will be featured at the Wings Over Houston Airshow Festival October 21 and 22 at Ellington Field. The show is a tribute to aviation's past and future, but it wouldn't be possible without volunteers such as JSC's Everett Gibson.

Gibson, well known throughout the JSC and space community for his work in planetary materials, has been a volunteer with the Wings Over Houston Airshow since it began 16 years ago. For the last 10 years, he has served on the airshow's executive committee.

"It began as a way to give something back to the community at a time when they did not have a major airshow," explained Gibson. Gibson concedes he holds a special place in his heart for Ellington Field where three generations of his immediate family



Everett Gibson

*It's fun to bring together this collection of modern and World War II aircraft.. The airshow is a living history event.*

— Everett Gibson, Wings Over Houston Airshow Festival volunteer

have flown from in B-17 Flying Fortresses.

"Ellington Field is just a fascinating place, with its role as one of the early aviation sites for the armed forces," said Gibson. "From the early bi-planes based there, to the first night landings that were practiced there and its role in the history of the second World War – all the way to the crews training to go to the moon and now Shuttle crews."

Gibson's involvement with the Airshow has given him many memories as well as the opportunity to meet many of aviation's legendary figures.

"I've gotten to meet so many fascinating people, such as the Tuskegee Airmen, Bob Hoover, Generals Tex Hill and Joe Foss who have been honored guests at the airshows," said Gibson. "I also get to meet many current pilots and have even gotten to

fly with the Royal Air Force's Nimrod Display Team."

Those are exciting perks but due reward for the hard work that goes into the event. Gibson says the executive committee is usually working on the airshow two years in advance to coordinate with international performers and military demonstration teams. The airshow is an all-volunteer effort, requiring the time and dedication of more than 400 people to bring the show together for the crowd on the ground. Proceeds from the ticket sales go to various aviation-related scholarship programs, helping to introduce our area youth to the excitement and science of flight. Profits from the airshow also go to help restore the historic World War Two aircraft such as the B-17G Flying Fortress *Texas Raiders* which is based at Ellington. Gibson has worked on two complete

restorations on the bomber and has completed 120 missions in the aircraft.

"It's all worth it," said Gibson. "We work on it for the benefits of the community. It's a unique opportunity to put something back into the community. It's fun, interesting, and exciting to see the excitement on the faces of our youth along with the tears in the eyes of our senior citizens and veterans. To know that we are helping people that have special needs to be able to come to a barrier free airshow and to see something that is otherwise difficult for them to do is rewarding."

So what is his favorite part? Without hesitation, Gibson says the Tora! Tora! Tora! reenactment of the attack on Pearl Harbor is his favorite component of the airshow. He also enjoys serving as a B-17 crew member for *Texas Raiders* flying in the show – when time permits. ■

*For more information on the airshow, visit [www.wingsoverhouston.com](http://www.wingsoverhouston.com) or call (713) 266-4492.*